

WHALEY BRIDGE
Allotment & Gardeners'
Society

newsletter

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2002

Dear Member,

Another excellent AGM! Just over forty turned up this year to re-elect your sitting officers, and hear your Chairman, John Pressman, and Treasurer, Bob Kellock, both tell us it had been another good year for the society.

Roy Jennings gave us details of the 'Tool Hire Scheme' that are pretty much as mentioned in last month's newsletter. Roy has made arrangements with the Speedy Hire Centre in New Mills for members, on production of their membership card, to hire anything (within reason!) from their extensive catalogue at a discount of 15% - which must be a good deal. And it gets better! The society will then re-imburse 10% of the hire charge on presentation of the bill to the Treasurer or any committee member. Delivery charges from Speedy also qualify for the discount.

Members also gave the thumbs up to the additional idea of the society purchasing a selection of non-powered hand tools for hire by members. These will be available from the store when open for business during the summer, on a Sunday to Sunday basis, and by arrangement with the secretary outside this period. We will require a refundable deposit of £10 - not that we don't trust members of course.

Items that we intend to buy to get the scheme rolling include a long handled tree lopper, ratchet lopper, pruning saw and to keep your lawn looking immaculate a hollow tine aerator, a spring loaded lawn spiker and a fertilizer spreader. We'll also hold a decent size sprayer for those who like to zap all their bugs! In the meantime if there are any particular tools you would like us to consider buying please let us know as we obviously want to stock ones that will be useful to members.

We also plan to buy a couple of 'gazebos' that members planning summer parties on those immaculate lawns may borrow. You'll no doubt require some shelter bearing in mind our climate!

Ethel gave us details of our celebration Garden Party at Whaley Hall but, apart from telling you that tickets will cost £6, as you probably don't have your new diaries yet I'll leave the actual date until next time - but don't book holidays for early June! Coffee Morning dates also to come.

You may recall that the object of the above exercise is to spend some of our surplus funds for the benefit of members so are in fact 'pilot schemes' to see how much they are going to cost us. Funds of course are not unlimited.

The agm finished with the usual enjoyable get-together (after paying subs which are now due and still only £2). Mrs Swindells was the lucky winner of our star raffle prize of a free outing for two on one of our trips next year.

Don't forget our Christmas Coffee Morning on Saturday, 21 December which, with your help, should be a great success. I have to bore readers by making the usual plea for lots of help. When I tell you that we're having a tombola stall as well as a raffle stall, cake stall, quality book stall, taking subs stall, recruiting new members stall, not forgetting the local shop coffee round, you'll know what I mean!

Seriously though, we need a decent raffle prize or two but more importantly lots of small items for the tombola - you know the sort of thing. Anything will be gratefully accepted at any time from now up to the Wednesday before and can be left at 6 Rock Bank, with any committee member, or you can ring me and I will collect.

It's always a festive time in the village and our helpers will join in by, hopefully, sporting Father Christmas hats etc. and, possibly even mistletoe. You should be so lucky! We look forward to seeing you in whatever capacity on the 21st.

Welcome to two new members - Elaine Holmes of Goyt Place (our new, pleased to report, keen allotmenteer) and Bill Oakins of Reservoir Road (well known local potter).

PTO

Our thanks to the 34 members (three up on last year) who ordered seeds through the society. These – the seeds that is - should be with us next month and will be delivered as usual.

Great news from the store! Our recent stocktaking revealed one or two items that were a bit slow moving (nothing to do with my over-ordering, of course) so we're making some drastic reductions on these to make room for new stock. Tubs of Sodium Chlorate at 70p, Coolglass at £1.05 (both half price), Lawn seed at a ridiculous £1 for 1kg and Liquid Derris at £1 (both less than half price). There's also Groworganic concentrated manure at only £3 – usual price £4.60. Remember folks, when they've gone they've gone! I'll be at the store between 10am and 12noon on Sunday, 1 December to take your orders.

Apparently there are gardeners who use coffee grounds in the garden to deter slugs and snails. I didn't know this until Mrs O'Donoghue sent me a newspaper cutting pointing out that, and wait for this, the EU's biocidal products directive 98/8 states that no product can be used against garden pests unless it has been tested and licensed at a cost of £120,000. So, if you are throwing your used coffee grounds onto the garden be warned – you are breaking the law. On second thoughts – sod 'em!

ALLOTMENT VIEW

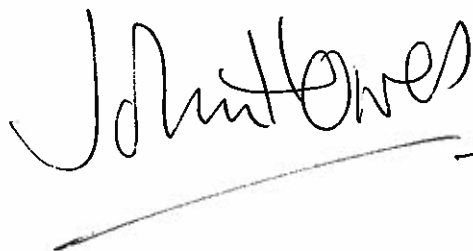
The recent heavy rains have brought to a halt any serious activity on the plots apart from the collection of what's left of the vegetables and checking on what, if any, damage may have been caused by some windy weather. Fortunately very little I understand.

Our resident young Robin has now acquired his/her red breast and appears without fail whenever I do. I hope it survives the winter as I was reading just the other day that they quite often starve during very cold ones. To look at him/her you wouldn't think they could be as vicious when defending their territory as the article reading says

NATURE NOTES

Readers will know that my forays into this area are fraught with possibilities for error – so take what follows with a pinch of salt but early last month I saw a kestrel over the fields by Marsh Lane in Furness Vale being hounded by what appeared to be three or four of the last of the summer's swallows. They gave up after the kestrel didn't seem overly bothered but then it was attacked by a group of jackdaws/crows (I'm hedging my bets here) who very nearly made contact on several occasions. The kestrel then made off after obviously having had enough harassment but it was quite spectacular while it lasted. I now await corrections from the experts!

Nearly forgot, and this really goes against the grain, but here it is only November but as this is the last newsletter of the year I have to wish you all 'A Very Happy Christmas' from your Chairman, John Pressman, and committee.



John Howes, Secretary
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